

## 22. INDIGENOUS METHOD OF TRANSLOCATION OF THE TUCKTOO *GECKO* *GECKO* LINN. AS PRACTISED IN MIZORAM, INDIA

Tucktoo is the largest among the geckos and the common house gecko of south east Asia, found in India only in Bihar, Bengal, and Assam (Daniel 1983). The lizard has however been observed in the main towns of Mizoram like Aizwal, Champhai, Kolasib, Serchhip, Lunglei, Lawngtlai and Vairangte by us. It is locally known as OK. OK.. as its call appears to sound like that. Literature reveals that none of the Indian lizards including Geckos are poisonous (Daniel 1983, The Book of Indian Reptiles). However, the Mizos believe that the Tucktoo is very poisonous, and allege that its bite as causing death of people in Mizoram. Apart from that it is also believed that the house which harbours a tucktoo, and if it calls OK.. OK.. nine times continuously at a stretch is a lucky house.

Many people dislike the presence of the lizard in houses due to its droppings. Therefore to get rid of these lizards they translocate them without killing, by using tobacco. Some chewing tobacco sold as 'Khaini' and 'Sada' in pan shops is kept as paste or dry at the end of a dry bamboo which is taken towards

the mouth of the tucktoo. The tobacco is kept on the bamboo in such a manner that when the bamboo is moved towards the mouth of the Tucktoo, from a distance, it (tucktoo) bites the bamboo and immediately some tobacco goes into its mouth. Within 2 to 5 minutes of this operation, the tobacco exerts its effect and the lizard loses its balance. Its limbs start shivering, lose their coordination and the gecko falls down, it is then caught by hand and placed in a container, where it remains senseless for 20 to 30 minutes. During this period the Geckos are translocated to Forest/Jungle areas in a humane manner without damaging or killing them.

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## 23. "BATTALION MOVEMENT" IN RECENTLY METAMORPHOSED BICOLOURED FROGS (*RANA CURTIPES*)

While visiting a cardamom plantation in the Coorg Hills on the morning of the 19 March 1994, we observed a curious swarm of bicoloured frogs emerging from a pond. The pond in question is located in a wooded defile and is one of the two which is fed by the Madenad stream on a plantation belonging to Mr. K.M. Chengappa, the junior author's brother-in-law. The plantation is located 8 kilometres from Madikeri. Large swarms of tadpoles were visible in the two ponds and were seen to display the shoaling behaviour characteristic of the species (Daniel and Sekar 1989, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 86: 194-202). On a steep grassy bank we noticed a closely

spaced column of frogs emerging from the water and slowly creeping through the vegetation. The movement of the frogs proceeded in a single mass and after one meter, gave way to a side column, which was equally dense in its spacing. After a distance of 1.5 m the individual spacing increased and the frogs began to disperse in diverging directions. The movement of these frogs was distinctively battalion-like and differs from the unsynchronized movement usually seen in recently metamorphosed anurans upon emerging from water. We have not found a description of this movement in the literature, but note that V.S. Vijayan observed (in Daniel and Sekar 1989) that "enormous